

Lesson Rationale:

*Gone are the days of paper and pen for writing purposes! I created this activity so that I could teach students about compare and contrast essay writing and to utilize collaboration skills. In this activity, students will also have a chance to learn about public speaking since their work will be presented to the whole class. I love to see students work together. I feel that this prepares them for the "real" world by giving them the opportunity to work as a team to produce a finished product. For me, this type of collaborative work allows for me to see how students can work together and gives me the opportunity to guide those who can't. In other words, I am not only teaching content, I am also teaching social skills. It is always challenging to put groups together for a project but it is also rewarding when I see gains in collaboration skills. Quiet work is not for me. I really enjoy watching students move about and talking about work they are creating. I never wanted to be the kind of teacher that relied on worksheets and lectures to teach. In experiencing the learning process through collaborative learning activities, I not only learn about the potential of my students, but where I can become a learning tool for their social growth as well.*

Descrition of Project:

My students like to use the computer lab for their assignments. They also like to work in groups. In this lesson plan, I incorporated technology and the writing content by having the students compare and contrast two topics and present their work in a PowerPoint presentation. I randomly selected several paired topics and students were placed into groups. Each group chose a pair of topics and began to compose a compare and contrast essay on these topics. Prior to the creation of this presentation, students were taught how to write a compare and contrast essay and individually wrote an essay. Students were all comfortable with the context of this essay prior to embarking on their group project. My students were also taught how to add images, sound and voice to PowerPoints before in another class project. However, I will be closely monitoring their progress and assisting them with their creation.

Importance of Experience:

When learning how to write essays, it can be boring to students to create a piece of writing the traditional pen and paper way. Technology is here to stay and it is not only important to me that my students know how to write a specific type of essay but that they can also present their work in a manner that is new and more visual. I also wanted to teach my students some speech components. In this lesson, they will present their finished product to the class. In short, I can combine writing skills, technological skills and public speaking skills into one lesson. I am going two steps further than the traditional format of writing through the integration of technology and public speaking components of this lesson. I have seen teaching and learning evolve over the years. The planning, delivery and assessment of this lesson made me realize how lucky I am to have these tools at my disposal to teach with. Years ago, it was not possible to enhance pedagogy with technological tools, even simple ones like the PowerPoint make a lesson more inviting and conducive to student learning. I have learned so much about technological tools and am still learning about how to use them effectively in teaching. The possibilities are endless.

Tasks Accomplished and Skills Demonstrated:

I was able to review the writing skill of comparing and contrasting in this activity. I also was able to allow for students to practice and sharpen their PowerPoint skills and also, to practice public speaking. By giving them guidelines to follow. Also, working as a team gives students the opportunity to learn about team work and for me to learn more about their team working skills. It was great to watch them work together and exhibit writing and technological skills. This is actually a lesson I have done and it is also exciting to be in the audience when they present their collaborative work.

Skills and Knowledge Gained:

In writing lessons, I have used many PowerPoint presentations to teach my students. I have run into problems with server issues and have had to improvise by forgetting the PowerPoint and teaching materials with traditional methods such as the board and chalk. This actually happened the first time I used a PowerPoint to teach with. As I gain knowledge through my classes, I have gone back and changed some of my lessons for the better as well. I was able to sharethis lesson with other teachers and some brought their classes into mine so that I could teach their students how to create an awesome PowerPoint. As we me, the more my students use a certain technological tool, the better they get at it.

Connection to Standards:

In this lesson, I was able to connect to the following NET Standards for Teachers :

**1. Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity**

Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments.

a. Promote, support, and model creative and innovative thinking and inventiveness

c. Promote student reflection using collaborative tools to reveal and clarify students’ conceptual understanding and thinking, planning, and creative processes

**2. Design and Develop Digital Age Learning Experiences and Assessments**

Teachers design, develop, and evaluate authentic learning experiences and assessment incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in context and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the NETS·S.

a. Design or adapt relevant learning experiences that incorporate digital tools and resources to promote student learning and creativity

d. Provide students with multiple and varied formative and summative assessments aligned with content and technology standards and use resulting data to inform learning and teaching

**4. Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility**

Teachers understand local and global societal issues and responsibilities in an evolving digital culture and exhibit legal and ethical behavior in their professional practices.

a. Advocate, model, and teach safe, legal, and ethical use of digital information and technology, including respect for copyright, intellectual property, and the appropriate documentation of sources

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This activity will involve students writing and presenting a Powerpoint presentation comparing and contrasting a topic of their choice. Students will be given a choice of four topics to choose from. The choices are: Baseball and Football, Physical Beauty to Inner Beauty, Snow Fall and Rain Fall, and Music and Books. Students will work in groups of two. This Language Arts activity will be done by 6th grade students who are mostly general education students with two students with learning disabilities. Both students with learning disabilities will be paired with a general education student for support. Students will share responsibility in the research and production of this PowerPoint presentation. This activity will take place in the computer lab.

**Learning Objectives:**

Through this activity, these 6th grade students, in groups of two, will learn how to write a compare/contrast essay. The students will also learn how to deliver the finished product in front of their peers through a PowerPoint presentation.

**Technology Integration:**

Students will be able to utilize media tools to present their work in this PowerPoint presentation. They will be able to add images, sound and voice to enhance their writing. Because they will be writing their work and presenting it, students will be able to display their knowledge and skills in a media oriented product. Because of this, students will not only exhibit content knowledge in their work but also technology knowledge. After constructing this PowerPoint, students will be able to use the skills they learn in future classroom projects. The rationale behind using this tool is that students will not only construct a compare and contrast finished topic, but will also practice research methods to find specific images and information to complete their work. Students will practice the art of public speaking as well by having to present their work to their classmates using a technological tool.

**Connection to standards:**

***Language Arts: (GLCE)***

* Write multiparagraph compositions on student- or teacher-selected topics organized with organizational patterns (e.g., comparison/contrast, order of importance, chronological order) appropriate to the topic
* Organize individual paragraphs with topic sentences, relevant elaboration, and concluding sentences
* Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as prewriting (e.g., brainstorming, researching, raising questions, generating graphic organizers)
* Develop grade-appropriate compositions applying writing processes such as publishing using technology
* Use the various modes to write compositions, including comparison/contrast
* Adjust diction and enunciation to suit the purpose for speaking
* Use standard English grammar, diction, syntax, and pronunciation when speaking
* Adjust volume and inflection to suit the audience and purpose of presentations
* Deliver oral presentations and responses, including formal and informal descriptive presentations that convey relevant information and descriptive details

***NETS for students:***

*Creativity and Innovation*

Students demonstrate creative thinking, constructknowledge, and develop innovative products andprocesses using technology.

* Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes
* Create original works as a means of personal or group expression

*Technology Operations and Concepts*

Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems and operations.

* Understand and use technology systems

**Student’s Prior Knowledge:**

This activity will enhance student’s knowledge about comparing and contrasting topics.Prior to constructing the PowerPoint, students will have been taught the mechanics of comparing and contrasting topics. I will have checked for understanding of this material because students have written an individual compare and contrast essay on a pre-chosen topic. Students will have compiled information on their choice of topics by gathering information from pre chosen websites in a custom Google search I will provide for them on each of the four topic choices. Students will also be instructed on how to add images, sound and voice to their PowerPoint through a mini lesson I will present. I will also have added images, videos and sound links to the custom Google search.

**Content Knowledge:**

As a Language Arts major, I am confident in teaching my students about compare and contrast writing. I am also familiar with the PowerPoint software and have used it many times in my teaching.

**Pedagogical Knowledge:**

My students will have watched a demonstration on how to create PowerPoint presentations using images, sound and voice. I utilize the following videos and students will view them in my Smart Board:

Images:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_qIuCPXrQk>

Sound:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zDoa3H5TUs>

Voice:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rv9vinEMbIE>

Students will also be given time to practice these on their own by creating a couple of PowerPoint slides embedding sound, images and voice. Since I have created many PowerPoint presentations embedding voice, sounds and images, I will troubleshoot any problems while I monitor their learning in the computer lab.

**Technology Knowledge:**

I am familiar with PowerPoint and have created many presentations to enhance my teaching using voice, sound and images. I am comfortable with teaching these concepts to my students and will use YouTube videos to aid in my instruction of how to add these to PowerPoint presentations. I will allow students time to learn these at their own pace and will create an environment that is conducive for them to do so. When learning any new technology tool, one can’t feel rushed and each step is necessary to promote success in the finished product. I pride myself in knowing that I will be patient and thorough and make sure that when my students are paired to create their own presentation, they will be comfortable with the knowledge I will have passed on to them.

**TPACK Analysis:**

The integration of content, technology and pedagogy is evident in this activity. Students will know the content; compare and contrast writing, students will understand how to create a PowerPoint utilizing images, sound and voice, and I feel that my methods to have students produce a finished product are strong. When finished, students will fully comprehend the content component as well as have gained knowledge how to create a super PowerPoint presentation.

**Assessment Plan:**

Prior to embarking on this project, I will have presented my students with the following rubrics and I will have discussed each part of the rubrics with them.

*PowerPoint Rubric:*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | | **Powerpoint Appearance and Content : PowerPoint Rubric** | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| CATEGORY | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Sequencing of Information** | Information is organized in a clear, logical way. It is easy to anticipate the type of material that might be on the next slide. | Most information is organized in a clear, logical way. One slide or item of information seems out of place. | Some information is logically sequenced. An occasional slide or item of information seems out of place. | There is no clear plan for the organization of information. |
| **Content - Accuracy** | All content throughout the presentation is accurate. There are no factual errors. | Most of the content is accurate but there is one piece of information that might be inaccurate. | The content is generally accurate, but one piece of information is clearly flawed or inaccurate. | Content is typically confusing or contains more than one factual error. |
| **Use of Graphics** | All graphics are attractive (size and colors) and support the theme/content of the presentation. | A few graphics are not attractive but all support the theme/content of the presentation. | All graphics are attractive but a few do not seem to support the theme/content of the presentation. | Several graphics are unattractive AND detract from the content of the presentation. |
| **Cooperation** | Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively all of the time. | Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively most of the time. | Group delegates tasks and shares responsibility effectively some of the time. | Group often is not effective in delegating tasks and/or sharing responsibility. |
| **Background** | Background does not detract from text or other graphics. Choice of background is consistent from card to card and is appropriate for the topic. | Background does not detract from text or other graphics. Choice of background is consistent from card to card. | Background does not detract from text or other graphics. | Background makes it difficult to see text or competes with other graphics on the page. |
| **Spelling and Grammar** | Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors. | Presentation has 1-2 misspellings, but no grammatical errors. | Presentation has 1-2 grammatical errors but no misspellings. | Presentation has more than 2 grammatical and/or spelling errors. |
| **Text - Font Choice & Formatting** | Font formats (e.g., color, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content. | Font formats have been carefully planned to enhance readability. | Font formatting has been carefully planned to complement the content. It may be a little hard to read. | Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material. |

*Compare and Contrast Writing:*

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| Compare and Contrast Rubric   |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Criteria** |  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | **Opening** |  | Strong main idea/ topic sentence is clear, concise, and identifies character, theme or issue. | Adequate main idea/ topic sentence identifies character, theme or issue. | Main idea/ topic sentence is unclear and doesn't address character, theme or issue. | Main idea/ Topic sentence is not evident. | | **Organization** |  | Well developed essay with a clear and logical format. | Generally well organized with a clear and logical format. | Some evidence of planning and organization. | Lacks little planning and organization. | | **Support** |  | Includes 3 or more well developed examples or reasons for each similarity or difference. | Includes at least 2 examples or reasons for each similarity or difference. | Includes at least 1 example or reason but some information maybe incorrect. | Provides little if any support for each similarity or difference. | | **Conclusion** |  | States a thoughtful or logical conclusion based on similarities and differences. | States a conclusion based on similarities and differences. | Conclusion is evident but does not draw on any similarities or differences. | No evidence of any conclusion or summary. | | **Uses Basic Writing Conventions** |  | Contains few, if any spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors. | Contains several errors in punctuation, spelling or grammar that do not interfere with meaning. | Contains many errors in punctuation, spelling and/or grammar that interferes with meaning. | Contains many errors in punctuation, spelling and/or grammar that make the piece illegible. |   Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score\_\_\_\_\_\_ |